

**Memorandum on Promoting  
Excellence and Accountability in  
Teaching**

*September 12, 1996*

*Memorandum for the Secretary of Education*

*Subject:* Promoting Excellence and  
Accountability in Teaching

Every child needs—and deserves—dedicated, outstanding teachers, who know their subject matter, are effectively trained, and know how to teach to high standards and to make learning come alive for students.

In order to make sure every child has the teachers he or she deserves, as a Nation we must:

- Recruit and retain the most talented people into teaching;
- Require tougher licensing and certification standards for teachers, invest in high-quality preparation and ongoing training to help teachers meet these standards, and increase dramatically the number of teachers who meet the demanding standards set by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards;
- Remove incompetent teachers quickly, fairly, and at less cost than at present and for those teachers who need such assistance, try to restore their enthusiasm or counsel them out of the profession; and
- Create systems for identifying and rewarding good teachers for achieving outstanding levels of knowledge and skills, especially as reflected in National Board Standards or other standards of quality adopted by States or local school districts.

I hereby direct you to assist States and local communities in meeting these challenges by:

(1) Notifying State and local education officials within 90 days of the date of this memorandum of the Federal resources available to address these challenges; and

(2) Identifying and disseminating within 6 months promising State and local practices responding to each of these challenges.

Please report annually to me on how States and local communities are responding to these challenges.

**William J. Clinton**

**Remarks at a Democratic Dinner in  
Beverly Hills, California**

*September 12, 1996*

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you, Hillary. I'm glad you had a good day. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank all of you for being here, but let me say a special word of thanks to Ron and to Jan Burkle for opening their home to us. We've made a lot of jokes about it tonight, but this place is a national treasure. And it's a great honor for us to be here. And I'm grateful for their friendship. Thank you, Ron, so much for everything.

Thank you, David Geffen, for telling us the story of your mother, for living the dreams of your parents, and for being not only a great citizen but an honest and true friend—always tells me exactly what you think—*[laughter]*—always in the spirit of friendship and loyalty to your country. And I thank you so much.

I thank the Hollywood Women's Political Committee for your role in this evening. I want to thank everyone who worked on this event, all the stagehands and everybody else who made Tom Hanks miserable up here. *[Laughter]* Did you love seeing Tom Hanks? I visualized him, fistfuls of Oscars, miserable up here with nothing happening. *[Laughter]*

Tom, you have suffered so much tonight it's okay with me if you go and do "Primary Colors" now. *[Laughter]* As a matter of fact, I'd like to see somebody make some money out of that thing using their own name. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, Chicago. Thank you, Tom Scott. Thank you, Paula Poundstone. You were especially good tonight. I thank Aaron Neville and his brothers and his band. I thank the Eagles for helping us to live in the present and the past at the same time.

Thank you, Maya, you were magnificent as always. I don't know why anybody would want to take "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" out of the library. I think every child's